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DISSEMINATION CONTROL ABBREVIATIONS

NOFORN-	Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals
NOCONTRACT-	Not Releasable to Contractors or Contractor/Consultants
PROPIN-	Caution—Proprietary Information Involved
NFIBONLY-	NFIB Departments Only
ORCON-	Dissemination and Extraction of Information Controlled by Originator
REL . . . -	This Information has been Authorized for Release to . . .

National
Photographic
Interpretation
Center

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14 JUNE 1977

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IMAGERY INFORMATION REPORT

BACKFIRE B RADAR/ELECTRONICS MAINTENANCE/CHECKOUT
AT AKHTUBINSK FLIGHT TEST CENTER, USSR (S)

(S/WNINTEL) A BACKFIRE B aircraft undergoing radar/electronics maintenance/checkout was observed at Akhtubinsk Flight Test Center, USSR, [redacted] The aircraft was on the large parking apron at Akhtubinsk/Vladimirovka Area Airfield [redacted] This airfield serves as the auxiliary airfield for flight test operations conducted at Akhtubinsk Flight Test Center.

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(TSR) The lower portion of the nose radome had been removed and was observed on the apron near the port wing of the BACKFIRE B. This ovate, tapering radome section has an overall length [redacted] The tapering, bow-shaped cavity of the radome section has an overall length [redacted]

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(TSR) The refueling probe projected [redacted] forward of the leading edge of the upper section of the nose radome. When the lower section is reattached, it will effectively extend the nose position [redacted] At that time, the forward projection of the refueling probe beyond the aircraft nose [redacted]

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(TSR) Another BACKFIRE B was parked on the starboard side of the BACKFIRE B undergoing radar/electronics maintenance/checkout. The nose radome on this second BACKFIRE B was intact. A definite chine-like effect, observed around the nose radome, results from the fact that the lower portion of the radome is slightly wider than the upper portion. The refueling probe on the second BACKFIRE B projects [redacted] forward of the nose of the radome.

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(S/WNINTEL) A third BACKFIRE B, observed at the airfield [redacted] also exhibited the chine-like effect around the nose radome.

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GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES

48-17-35N 046-12-16E

COUNTRY CODE

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(S/WNINTEL) BACKFIRE B and BACKFIRE A exhibiting a chine-like effect around the nose radome were also observed at Ryazan/Dyagilevo Airfield [REDACTED] This airfield is the Soviet Long Range Aviation (LRA) training base.

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(S/WNINTEL) A BLINDER B aircraft, a launch platform for the AS-4 (KITCHEN) missile, was parked adjacent to the two BACKFIRE B [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The nose radome on the BLINDER B was the standard nose radome and exhibited the same chine-like effect observed on the BACKFIRE B nose radome.

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(S/WNINTEL) Since BACKFIRE B and BLINDER B are used as KITCHEN launch platforms and both carry the DOWNBEAT radar system, the nose radomes on both aircraft should be similar in configuration. The appearance of a similar radome on BACKFIRE A would indicate that this aircraft may also be intended as a launch platform for KITCHEN. BACKFIRE may have been equipped with this nose radome in the past, but it has not been readily observed on prior imagery.

[REDACTED]

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